Smuggling across the Indo-Nepal Border

*362. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL; Will he Minister of FINANCE bo pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level delegation went to Nepal during June, 1988 to discuss measures to contain smuggling and drug trafficking in the region;

(b) if so, what are the details of the points discussed by the Indian delegation with the Nepalese Government authorities; and

(c) what fresh measures Govern ment propose to take to curb the-menace of smuggling across the Indo-Nepal border?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir. A high level delegation led by Shri Ajit Kumar Panja, Minister of State for Finance in the Govt, of India visited Nepal on 21-6-88 and held discussions on matters relating to unauthorised trade, smuggling and drug trafficking across the Indo.Nepal border with the Minister of Finance of (His Majesty's Government) Nepal.

(b) The existing arrangements in matters of trade and transit were reviewed. His Majesty's Government of Nepal was requested to look into the question of import licences issue^ by them for imports through the Port of Calcutta to that they were more specifically worded to eliminate the possibility of goods sensitive to smuggling being imported under cover of a general description.

Both sides agreed to take measures to counter smuggling of goods from India to Nepal and third country goods from Nepal to India. Both sides also reiterated their resolve to co-operate in curbing smuggling and drug trafficking. For this purpose, it was decided that the concerned authorities in both the countries should improve the arrangements for the exchange of information on smuggling and drug trafficking to enable quick action against the smugglers and drug traffickers.

Both sides also agreed on- the need for taking suitable and prompt action against individuals who commit offen-ceg in one country and escape to the territory of the other in accordance with the provisions of the existing

(c) The anti-smuggling drive has been intensified. The anti-smuggling machinery along the land borders in-eluding the Indo-Nepal border has been geared up. Close co-ordination is maintained with all the agencies concerned in the detection and prevention of-smuggling. Additional legal measures have been taken to combat drug smuggling and an Ordinance on the prevention of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs has been promulgated o$_n$. 4th July, 1988.

श्री हरबेन्द्र सिंह हंसपाल : मेडम, जो स्टेटमेंट मंत्री महोदय ने मेरे प्रश्न के उत्तर में दिया है टेक्नीकली और थ्योरेटिकली मैं उससे पूरी तरह से संतुष्ट हूं लेकिन इसका प्रेक्टीकल एसपेक्ट जो है वह बिलकुल डिफरेंट है । मेरा कहना यह है कि जैसे पंजाब और दूसरी बार्डर स्टेट्स के अन्दर कुछ विदेशी ताकतें गड़बड़ करवा रही हैं यह भी एक साइलेंट हमला हमारे युथ के ऊपर है । नेपाल से कितनी हशीश और गांजा आता है वह फिगर्ज अलग होंगी लेकिन सैकड़ों करोड़ों रुपये का हशीश और दूसरा इस किस्म का ड्रग ट्रेफिकिंग जो पंजाब बार्डर से हो रहा है उसका मतलब यह है कि युथ को उसका एडिक्ट बना दिया जाए । यह साइलेंट विदेशी हमला हमारे पर है ताकि आज से 10-20-25 साल के बाद कोई युथ सावित ही न रहे । इसलिए इस सवाल का प्रीपोरशन जो है वह सिर्फ इतना नहीं कि आपने बार्डर सील करने के लिए

नेपाल के अन्दर या कुछ और बातें कर के टेक्नीकली इम्पोर्ट और एक्सपोर्ट और कोई ठीक ढंग से कागजात ठीक कर लिए जाएं इससे यह समस्या हल होने वाली नहीं है । मेरी जानकारी के अनुसार जैसे आपने कहा कि

"The ai-smuggling machinery along the land borders including the Indo-Nepal border has been geared up."

मैं चूंकि पंजाब से आता हूं, 6-7 साल से देख रहा हूं कि वहां बॉर्डर सील करने की कोशिश हो रही है लेकिन वह हो नहीं रहा है । इंडो नेपाल बार्डर मेरी इन-फारमेशन के मुताबिक 1568 किलो-मीटर लम्बा है यह इनसे मैन नहीं हो सकेगा । मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि मंत्री महोदय जरूर सिंगापुर गये होंगे । जब सिंगापुर जाना होता है तो हवाई जहाज से उतरने से पहले विडियो सिस्टम से और पब्लिक एड्रेस सिस्टम से बार-बार कहते हैं कि अगर वहां पर आप ने किसी किस्म की स्मगलिंग सिंगापुर के अन्दर की तो इसके लिए डैथ पेनल्टी है । वहां पर जब एयर पोर्ट पर उतरते हैं तो जगह-जगह लिख करके भी लगाया गया है तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या मंत्री महोदय इस बात के लिए सोच रहे हैं कि हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर ऐसा डेट-रेंट पनिशमेंट उन लोगों को दिया जाए जो यह ट्रेड करते हैं ?

SHRi A JIT PANJA: Madam, this does not arise from this question*. But I can answer because this is an important question. A new Bill is coming in which the entire punishment, whatever was in the old Act, is sought to be amended and by which it 3s proposed that for the second offence there should be death penalty under certain circumstances. That will be coming in the Lok Sabha and thereafter in the Rajya Sabha.

श्री हरवेन्द्र सिंह हंसपाल : मैंने जो सवाल किया उसका जवाब मंत्री महोदय इतना ही दे देते कि इस पर विचार करेंगे तो मैं संतुष्ट हो जाता । लेकिन वे टाल गये । इतनी जरूरी बात है मैंने इतनी मिसालें देकर पूछा था... **(व्यवधान)** यह जरूरी नहीं है कि सवश्चन किया जाए और मंत्री महोदय इवेड करें... **(व्यवधान)** मुझे सिर्फ इतना जवाब चाहिए था कि विचार करेंगे । लोक सभा में 5 साल के बजाय 7 साल सजा कर देंगे इससे कुछ होने वाला नहीं है । उस पर कहते कि विचार करेंगे... **(व्यवधान)** मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि नेपाल तो एक बार्डर है लेकिन जो दूसरे बार्डर बर्मा और बंगलादेश में भी हैं उसके बारे में मंत्री महोदय क्या करने जा रहे हैं ?

SHRI AJIT PANJA. This question was not asked in the first one. In the first one the question asked was what deterrent punishment was to be given. As I have already submifed a Bill would be coming in the Lok Sabha soon and thereafter in the Rajya Sabha. Now about the second supplementary, the border between Nepali and India passing through three States, namely, U.P., Bihar and West Bengal, is about 1800 kilometres. After getting the information, we need more intensive information gathering between the two countries, a high-level delegation went there so that drug traffickers as well as smugglers of commercial goods could be controlled and exchange of information takes place. Madam, we have entered into a written agreement with the Government of Nepal on the 21st June, 1988. The salient features of the agreement are exchange of information quickly between the two countries about the movement of drug traffickers and also other smugglers of commercial goods, secondly, clear wording in import licences. Nepal used to issue import licences in which there was some vagueness. We had a discussion, I had a discussion with my counterpart there in order to clear the wording of the import licence so that they may not get out of the action taken by the law. Third provision is the alternative cash crop. All those people who are indulging in this activity like opium cultivation, unless we look after them and see that they become otherwise pecuniarily and financially wel] settled which will be possible by

exposing them to alternative cash crops in which they are interested and our experts in agricultural department I will help them and that was agreed to. The fourth was counter-intelligence regarding smuggling of commercial goods between India and Nepal and third country goods which ! are coming either through Nepal to India or going from India to Nepal. . And the last one is that having such a vast land border, individuals after committing an offence in India and escaping to Nepal or committing an offece in Nepal and fleeing to India we are having exchange of these peo- i pie. These are the steps taken and effectively taken.

श्री हरबेन्द्र सिंह हंसपाल : मैंने यह सवाल नहीं किया । मेरे सवाल का इन्होंने जवाब नहीं दिया । मैं पहले के जवाब से पूरी तरह संतुष्ट हूं । मैंने पूछा था कि जो और भी बार्डर हैं बर्मा और बंगलादेश के उनके लिए क्या कर रहे हैं । शायद ये हिंदी नहीं समझते हैं । अगर कहें तो मैं अंग्रेजी में कह दूं ?

I will ask in English. I am asking what arc you going to do to check this activity so far as your border with Bangladesh and Burma is concerned? SHRi AJIT PANJA: Madam, the quesction pertain to Nepal and not Bangladesh nor Burma.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN; Madam, the border between India and Nepal is an open border and free travel of the citizens between the two countries is also allowed Madam, where the border is open I do not understand how tfce Government can fully check smuggling. I understand that there are va- rious entry points between the two countries but since the border is open and unguarded, people can enter and leave from any point they choose for smuggling when there is such a big border, unguarded border, open border, open border. I would like to know from the Minister how they propose to check smuggling thoroughly when the border is not sealed because from the statement it is not clear how the anti-smuggling drive can be in- tensified when the border is clearly open.

SHRI AJIT PANJA; Madam, there are certain known points of entry and through our intelligence service also. In fact that was one of the reasons for my visiting Nepal, if we exchange quick information from Nepal side to us and from us to Nepal, it is possible to intensify the drive and we have succeeded in that. I can quote the figures. Value of goods seized in 1984, in one year, was Rs. 1 crore and 81 lakh, which went up in 1987 to Rs. 12 crore 87 lakh, and up to 31st May 1988, it has gone up to Rs. 7 crore 66 lakh. Although it is open border, but our intelligence people are also wrok-ing. As it is easy for people to travel, it is also easier for us to gather in- telligence. What we have done at different points is, we are having or the spot meetings of the customs and other revenue intelligence officers so that we can check smuggling and drug trafficking.

SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: One of the first agreements amongst 'he SAARC countries was to combat smuggling Of narcotics across the borders of the countries known as the Golden Crescent. A working group was also set up and it submitted concrete measures to be taken by respective countries. I am glad that additional legal measures have been taken and an Ordinance was promulgated. I would like to know whether the Government is bringing a comprehensive legislation to this effect in the current session of Parliament, looking to the serious-nest of the situation and is the Gov- ernment aware whether equal and similar puritive measures are also taken in Nepal and Pakistan.

SHRI AJIT PANJA; So far as Nopal is concerned, they asked for a copy of our Bill and the Ordinance which we have already promulgated, and it is coming up as a Bill, as I stated. Besides, as I said, Narcotics and Psycho. tropic Substances Act is already there and we are amending it so that the

SAARC agreements to which the hon. Member referred and rightly empha sised upon, are fwlJy given effect to. This was one of the points of my dis cus-ion when I visited Nepal and also other countries, as mentioned by" the hon. Member.

श्रीमती प्रतिभा सिंह : उपसभापतिजी, अभी मंत्री महोदय ने बताया कि यह हाई-लेवल डेलिगेशन लेकर गये थे और बहुत बड़ी-बड़ी बातें भी की है, लेकिन चूंकि मैं बार्डर पर ही रहती हूं—मेरा घर है और बीच में सड़क है और उस पार नेपाल है जहां से जलेश्वर तीन मील है और जनकपुर 12 मील है । तो जो कुछ मैंने वहां देखा है वह यह है कि एक तो जो इनका चैकपोस्ट है, उसपर कोई व्हीकल नहीं है और उस तरफ गांजा पैदा करना अलौड है । तो जब ट्रक्स आते हैं, तो उनको कैसे पकड़ा जाएगा ? मान लीजिए कि खबर भी है, तो पकड़ने का रास्ता क्या है बिना गाड़ी के ?

दूसरी चीज है कि अभी 14 तारीख को अभी तक तो ड्रग स्मगलिंग और अन्य चीजों की स्मगलिंग होती थी, पर 14 तारीख की हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स में लास्ट पेज पर दिया हुआ है एक न्यूज आइटम कि 300 ट्रक्स चाईनीज हथियारों के नेपाल में आये हैं और आप ने खुद माना है कि बार्डर बड़ा लम्बा है, एक हजार मे ऊपर मील है उत्तर प्रदेश, उत्तर बिहार और बंगाल —अब इतने बड़े बार्डर को मैन करना या उसको सील करना कोई आसान बात नहीं है, क्योंकि बहुत लोग जो राई में बसते हैं,वह भी हिन्दुस्तानी हैं और आपस में शादी-विवाह होते हैं, रिशतेदारी है, सिर पर एक टोकरी लेकर रात को चले आएं तो किसी को भी पता नहीं चलेगा । तो कौनसी इनटेलीजेंस होगी जो पता करेगी ? तो यह सब जो रोज की दिक्कतें हैं, उन पर क्या कभी सरकार ने सोचा है कि कैसे इस समस्या का समाधान करेगी ? इनके पास चैकपोस्ट नहीं है, इनके पास व्हीक्ल्स नहीं हैं जिनसे कि उनका पीछा किया जाए । जो यहां ट्रक्स आते हैं, उनमें हथियार वाले लोग होते हैं और इनके पास पैसे भी होते हैं, जो यह जगह-जगह पर छोटते जाते हैं । तो यह रोकेंगे कैसे ? चार ट्रक्स पास हो जाते हैं, तो कोई एक ट्रक पकड़ा जाता है । गांव के लोग भी खबर देने आएं, तो किसको खबर दें—कोई होता नहीं । जब चैकपोस्ट को खबर देते हैं, तो . . .

उपसभापति : आप सवाल पूछिये ।

श्रीमती प्रतिभा सिंह : चैकपोस्ट के पास कोई गाड़ी नहीं होती । तो मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहती हूं कि चैक-पोस्ट को व्हीक्ल्ज द्वारा मैन करने के लिए इन्होंने कोई राशि अलग की है क्या ?

उपसभापति : और क्या व्यवस्था की है ?

श्रीमती प्रतिभा सिंह : दूसरी चीज यह है कि नेपाल में जो लोग गांजा उपजाने के काम में लग हुए हैं, तो उनकी रोकथाम भारत सरकार कैसे करेगी मैं इन दो सवालों का उत्तर जानना चाहती हूं ।

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Madam, so far as the infrastructural difficulties, including vehicles, are concerned, the hon. Member is right. We had a series of meetings. There is shortage of vehicles. Now, new manoeuvres and techniques are being adopted by these smugglers and drug traffickers. We had meetings not only covering Nepal but also other eastern zone areas including other neighbouring countries. So far as laboratories are concerned, we will be very shortly setting up more laboratories for testing heroin and other things. In regard to vehicles also, we are gradually improving.

In regard to ganja and other plantations in Nepal, we had a detailed discussion. That is why they arc destroying these plantations. We are also doing this. But Madam, the question is one of permanently settling them. We find that most of these cultivators, unless they are given alternative crops, will only go for

ganja or opium. That is why they grow these things like ganja, opium etc. We discussed about making them cultivate alternative cash crops. We are taking steps. In U.P. and in the Idukki District of Kerala, hundreds of acres of illicit cultivation of opium poppy and cannabis have been destroyed in the last one year.

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Madam, as the hon. Minister said in his reply, India is negotiating with Nepal for increased vigilance on 'the border to check drug trafficking. We know that Bombay has become the main transit point for drug trafficking because of the drugs being smuggled from Pakistan. That is why Interpol and other international agencies are j keeping a watch over Bombay. Now. in view of the increasing tendency or danger of smuggling of drugs from Nepal, Calcutta is likely to become another major transit point. With Bombay being a transit point already, there is the problem of drug addiction in Bombay city. Therefore, I would like to know whether the Gcv-vernment of India is considering similar steps, preventive steps, in Calcutta also for curbing the menace of drug smuggling and drug trafficking so that Calcutta does not become another city of drug addiction like Bombay.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALA-VIYA: The hon. Minister belongs to that State.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: The problem is not only in the case of Calcutta but in the case of Madras city also. That is why we are taking stringent action in those cities also and infrastructure is being strengthened.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY-How many Congressmen you have rounded up so far?

श्री शान्ति त्यागी : मैडम, क्या माननीय मंत्री जी को इस बात की जानकारी है कि कई बार हमारी जो तीन स्टेट्स हैं उन की जो बार्डर पुलिस है वह तस्करों से मिली रहती है और क्या ऐसे कोई मामले सरकार के सामने आए हैं ? यदि ऐसे मामले सरकार के सामने आए हैं तो उसके लिए आपने क्या कदम उठाए

SHRI AJIT PANJA: It has not come to our notice. But we do not act only through the border police. We take the help of other forces also including the intelligence, platodress-ed forces.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Madam, I also know something about the Indo-Nepal border because... *(Interruptions)* during the Emergency I had to cross it once. *{Interruptions)* .

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): As Home Minister. I have taken note of it.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: You can also tap my telephone to find out more information. *(Interruptions)* It is a fact that when Mr. Morarji Desai was the Prime Minister, there was hardly any smuggling.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Put your question.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: I am coming to the point. Tins wr.s because he negotiated a trade and transit treaty with Nepal. I would like to know from the hon. Minister. what is the present status of this trade and transit treaty with Nepal which could help them regulate the smuggling activity.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: This trade and transit treaty was existing aJong with the SAARC treaty. A lot of information from Nepal was coming and our catch in regard to smuggling was increasing. That is why I visited Nepal so that we could have a discussion and plug the loopholes that were increasing. So far as the period

is concerned, -when Mr. Moraiji De-sai was the Prime Mln'iter the was less because there wss no activity to detect smug^lHsg.

*363. *[The questioners (Shri Dhu-leshwar Meena and Shri Bhagatram Manhar) were absent. For answer* vide *col* 34.35 infra].

Demand for Uttarkhand State

*364. SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: Will the Miinister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a persistent demand for a separate State of 'Uttarakhand' from the people of hilly regions of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) whether Government have con-sidered this demand; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and by when a separate hill State called 'Uttarakhand' is likely to be formed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): I.T) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Such demands for separate State arise on account of economic imbalances. The Government of India is of the view that such imbalances in a particular State or region should be tackled through the mechanism of planning and development. Creation of a separate State may not be the answer to the problem .

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAY: Madam, the answer is very unsatisfactory. The reply of the Minister to parts (b) and (c) of the question is that the mechanism of planning and development should provide an answer for the development of Uttarakhand. But the mechanism of planning and development has been there since 1952. Till now this mechanism has not provided any answer to the poverty und unemployment prevail- I ing in this region. In the last part of the answer, it has been stated that creation of a separate state would not be the answer. If the first is not the answer, then "'bat could be the answer?

Madam. Uttarakhand is another name for poverty. The youth in that region are migrating increasingly, leaving their old parents there. I am told that when old people die in uttarakhand, they have got to search for young people for performing cremation of the dead. This is the condition there. Therefore, may I ask the Minister whether he would consider seriously the problems of Uttarra-khand and concede at least in principle the demand for a separate state?

Secondly, may I ask whether the Government has got any proposal for bifurcating or trifureating Uttar Pradesh because Uttar Pradesh is too big a Stale?

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Why are you worried about Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTTR OF COMMERCE (SHRI DINESH SINGH): What is the harm ii' it is so?

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASAMY: I am only helping the Uttar Pradesh people... Because the present State of Uttar Pradesh is unmanageable politically, administratively and economically.

SHRI DINESH SINGH: You first, manage your own State well.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASAMY: May I ask the Home Minister whether he would consider the formation of three States out of one Uttar Pradesh now, to be followed by two States in Bihar?

SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV: I categorically say that there is no such thinking in the Central Government either to Strifurcate or bifurcate it into three States or two States, nor